

Deluxe digits

To help you brush up on the latest manicure and pedicure trends, Julie Vuong asks six of the industry's most polished performers to step forward

[Report by Julie Vuong]

It's official: the business of hands, feet and nails is booming. These deluxe grooming services – which have proved extremely resilient in challenging times – have grasped what it takes to move with – and invent – trends to give customers what they want.

Take the headline-grabbing fish pedicures: waves of people are dipping their feet into pools of dead skin-eating garra rufa fish, a reflection of a dynamic industry that's constantly throwing up fresh ideas. But it's not all wacky. In other areas, serious players are tapping into a buoyant market. For instance, consumer favourite Revlon, a pioneer of the ravishing red polish, launched its own nail bar in London to eager crowds, while fans of gel enhancements were treated to an array of bottled 'sweep-on' designs such as Shellac from CND (pictured left) and GELeration from Jessica.

The drive for modern convenience and beauty on a budget are two motivations behind the boost to manicure and pedicure services. Spas – which traditionally offered a limited selection of hand and foot therapies – are embracing these ideals and more. From organic foot-caressing pedicures to express on-the-spot polishes, spas are increasingly grasping hold of their handsome financial gains.

Unlike their busy high street counterparts, spas can better a simple file at a nail bar. More than this, wellbeing environments are becoming firm favourites for delivering finishing touches that are a step up from the norm. This is evident in the rise of social nail settings for 'manis with mates', as well as couch-based hand and foot therapies, performed in the privacy of the treatment room, which are also on the up.

But when it comes to training therapists, technicians and encouraging retail excellence, who should spa operators reach out to? To give you a helping hand, *European Spa* handpicks six of the industry's best.



Kay Pennington
Sales Emissary

Sweet Squared

Established by long standing nail ambassadors Samuel and Samantha Sweet, the company – based just outside Leeds – prides itself on championing bespoke customer service, award winning education and cutting edge London Fashion Week nail teams. Home to some of the industry's most popular names, Sweet Squared distributes the innovative gel application Shellac, CND SolarOil, Retention+ L+P system and Minx.

View from the top

Kay Pennington, Sweet Squared Sales Emissary, says keep pace with the trends:

"In a luxury industry like spa, only the best will do. That's why it's important to deliver both in outstanding results and catwalk-ready styles – exactly where Sweet Squared flourishes. For manicures and pedicures that sing, CND's prescriptive range of products is an established, quality brand. We guarantee visible radiance each and every time.

Adding to our portfolio is the award-winning nail coating Shellac, which is already a cult favourite. Comprised of 24 colours, the easy-to-apply gels offer high shine, a flawless finish and last for 14 days."

What's new for 2011?

"At Sweet Squared, it's not always about what's new but about what works. For decades, CND has believed in 'customizing' for our clients. Aside from the recent success of Shellac, CND must-haves remain strong including Sea Serum, SolarOil and Cuticle Away. As for trends though – simply look at what's hot throughout Fashion Week – it's CND who is creating the looks!"

Spa clients include: Corinthia London; Chill Out Spa, Liverpool; Monks Spa, Wales; The One Spa, Edinburgh; The Knutsford Spa, Cheshire

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CND have had great success with their Shellac range of nail coatings which promise 14-day wear and zero dry time



Susan Gerrard
MD, Gerrard International

Gerrard International

Known to many as 'Jessica UK', Gerrard International provides spas with the brand's renowned hand and foot treatments as well as quality education, support and guidance. Headquartered in Hertfordshire, it counts many of the UK's leading spas among its 5,000 customers. Their product portfolio includes the GELeration Soak-off Gel manicure, Zenspa and vitamin-enriched Jessica nail colours. Gerrard International also distributes its own line LeRemedi, billed as 'A Facial for the Hands'.

View from the top

Susan Gerrard, MD of Gerrard International, says go social:

"The best way to promote your hand, foot and nail services is to perform them in full view of your clients.

I would encourage spas to bring their manicures and pedicures out of traditional treatment rooms by creating a 'beauty bar' area near the reception. This space should have a social and inviting atmosphere and can be decorated accordingly. It is the perfect place to showcase your retail offerings and excite your clients with the range of nail colours available, encouraging post treatment purchases.

I would, however, offer clients the option of private rooms for pedicure treatments to allow for total relaxation."

What's new for 2011?

"In 2011 there will be huge interest in colour and Jessica has already introduced two new colour collections (with another on its way) and 18 new Jessica shades in GELeration. This year also marks the exciting launch of Gerrard International's own makeup brand, Mii. Developed from the feedback of thousands of spas, salons and their customers, Mii is made with standout formulas and our continued dedication to education and support."

Spa clients include: The Lifehouse, Essex; Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire; all Handpicked Hotel Spas in the UK; Titanic Spa, Yorkshire; The Sanctuary, London

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Clockwise from top: Jessica has already introduced two new colour collections, with a third due to launch imminently, as well as 18 new Jessica shades in its GELeration soak-off gel polish brand



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Shel Pink
Founder

Spa Ritual

SpaRitual is a luxury, vegan spa lifestyle brand distributed in the UK by NSI in Manchester. Created in 2005 by American Shel Pink, it targets today's holistic beauty devotees. It offers natural rituals for the hands, body, feet and nails, made with formulas that respect the environment. The polishes are vegan and free of DBP, made with organic or wildcrafted plant essence and wholly free of synthetic dyes.



View from the top

Get green fingered says Shel Pink, founder: "With so many different manicure and pedicure brands on the market, we believe SpaRitual offers something very different. Our ethical ethos is what people are drawn to: a holistic experience that will refresh their mind as well as their body. The popularity of the products speaks for itself. The core range of SpaRitual chakra care products is vast, while there is an option to create a bespoke ritual for your client depending on their frame of mind and mood they wish to achieve."

What's new for 2011?

"We're championing what we dub the 'Science of Slow Beauty'. Part of this idea is a new product that is designed to promote long-term health and beauty. The Handprint Hand Serum is made with 72 per cent certified organic ingredients including Swiss Apple stem cells for youthful skin. What's more, it's made with advanced plant technology and powerful antioxidants for maximum effectiveness to slow damaging effects from the environment and ageing."

Spa clients include: Scarlet Spa, Cornwall; Moddershall Oaks, Staffordshire; De Vere Mottram Hall, Cheshire; Ocean Spa, Cornwall; Brackendale Spa, Derbyshire, all UK-based

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www.sparitual.co.uk



Kirstie Allen
Founder

Pinks Boutique

Pinks Boutique – based in Derby – is a luxury organic product house offering a complete range of professional products covering skincare, body care, manicures, pedicures and waxing. Created by entrepreneur Kirstie Allen, Pinks therapies and hero products are influenced by traditional Asian spa cultures and use the finest ingredients as well as the most authentic techniques.



View from the top

Get on the couch insists Kirstie Allen, founder of Pinks Boutique:

"Since hand and foot treatments have hitherto generated less revenue than traditional couch-based spa treatments, we looked at remedying this concern.

We created our signature Indonesian Manicure which is carried out on the couch. It's a complete 'top to toe' treatment, which involves a luxurious full head and shoulder massage alongside a manicure and pedicure. Clients wear a robe so they get the feel of a spa service but leave with perfectly manicured fingers. The manicure lasts 1h 15m (1h 30m for the pedicure) and allows spas to charge a good rate."

What's new for 2011?

"The 'pop-up' concept, whereby brands take over an area for a temporary period, has been one of the key trends within the retail and restaurant sectors in recent times.

The phenomenon has seen leading beauty brands get in on the act too. Pinks recently worked with the leading organic health store Whole Foods Market in London's Kensington area to provide a pop-up eco nail bar for three days, giving our brand excellent exposure."

Spas clients include: Titanic Spa, Huddersfield; Chewton Glen, Hampshire; Aman at The Connaught, London; Dart Marina, Dartmouth; Tempus at The Oxfordshire, Oxford

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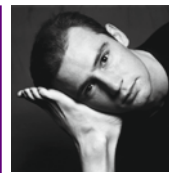


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Bastien Gonzalez

Bastien Gonzalez is famed for his glamorous and unique approach to foot treatments. Over the years, the French native has built a world-class name in footcare, earning him the status of 'foot virtuoso'. Keen to preserve the essence of his brand, Gonzalez hand picks and trains every member of his team to his treatment protocols, guaranteeing the same standard of excellence all over the world.

Bastien Gonzalez
Founder



View from the top

Elevate the spa experience advises Bastien Gonzalez, founder: "For a successful spa experience, you need a true sense of luxury, namely a quality treatment and excellent service. These are the pillars of my creation, The PediManiCure Studio, which was created to enhance the average spa experience. To achieve this, the right staff are key. Our highly skilled therapists need to gain a French Pedicurist diploma and are continually trained to the highest standards."

What's new for 2011?

"Watch out for my Black Diamond Scrub, a jewel encrusted foot-loving mineral foot exfoliator. It's made with the most exquisite ingredients: black diamond, particles of mother of pearl and black volcanic sand. It works a treat too, vigorously clearing away dead skin cells, leaving the skin smooth and silky."

Spa clients include: Les Thermes Marins De Monte-Carlo, Monte Carlo; The Spa at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Barcelona, Spain; The Istanbul Edition; and a host of One & Only Resort Hotels including Dubai, Mauritius and South Africa

+33 9 77 83 72 07
www.bastiengonzalez.com



B-Line

An independent British company founded by Annette Foley-Craigen in 1989, B-Line is an aromatherapy-based range with the natural qualities of plants and flowers at its heart. Known for championing the antibacterial properties of tea tree oil, B-Line puts results first. Based in Lincolnshire, B-Line has also gone global with a successful export division in Japan and another in Hong Kong.

Annette Foley-Craigen
Founder & CEO



View from the top

Think skincare, not just grooming, urges Annette Foley-Craigen, founder and CEO, B-Line: "Our experience in skincare shows that women (and men!) are becoming ever more discerning when it comes to seeking out their ideal spa treatment. They look for innovation, good value and reassurance that products are effective. They also enjoy being pampered but what's important is that the products live up to their promise. That's why we have developed therapies like the Soul Essential, which is much more than a pedicure. In fact, it's a holistic experience that encompasses all five senses."

What's new for 2011?

"B-Line strives to develop groundbreaking concepts to keep spa clients engaged – and we think our latest product is a winner. Called Skin Treat, it's a pioneering 'first to market' anti-ageing hand serum which allows spas to enhance their manicure offering and encourage retail sales.

Harnessing Shiitake Mushrooms, the formula is already proving to be successful from the feedback we have received."

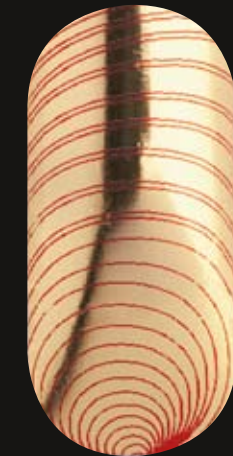
Spa clients include: Ragdale Hall, Leicestershire; Hoar Cross Hall, Staffordshire; The Beauty Rooms, Hartford; Elysium, Grantham, all UK-based

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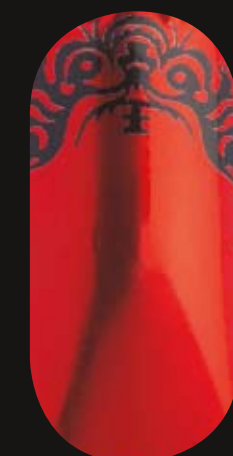
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